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**Anxiety in Deaf High School Students about the Future Education and Career:
Pilot Study of A School for the Deaf, Chiang Mai Province, Thailand**

MSSE Master's Project

Submitted to the Faculty
Of the Master of Science Program in Secondary Education
Of Students who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing

National Technical Institute for the Deaf
ROCHESTER INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

By

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In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
For the Degree of Master of Science

Rochester, New York

May 25, 2006

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ACKNOWLEDEMENTS

I would like to thank my advisor, Dr. Susan Foster. Also, her suggestion and feedback during my research process were very helpful. In addition, I would like to grateful to the Royal Thai Government for financial support during my graduate studies. Also, I would like to grateful to the director of the Anusarnsunthorn School for the Deaf for acceptance of authorization to administer the survey, to the assistant director, and teachers of deaf students for willing to coordinate the surveys to the deaf high school students. Moreover, I would like to mention my family and my wife's family for giving me the moral support. Also, Mrs. Benjamas Seephan, my mother in law, for helping to bring the copied surveys to the school and Ms. Suchitbhorn Lersilp, my wife, for her valuable help and support during the second year of my graduate studies. Finally, this project would be occurring with the 29 deaf high school students who participated in the survey and shares their experiences.

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the anxiety level of deaf high school students about their future education and careers upon graduating from high school at Anusarnsunthorn School for the Deaf, Chiang Mai province, Thailand. The purpose of this pilot study is to explore levels of anxiety in deaf high school students about their future upon graduating from high school in both the deaf students who plan to work and those who plan to continue study. Anxiety is defined as deaf high school students' feelings of uncertainty as they approach graduation from high school. Twenty-nine deaf students participated in this study by responding to survey questionnaires. The results showed that 34.5% of the participants planned to study in higher education upon graduate from high school, and 65.5% planned to work. The major motivation for participants who planned to attend college was encouragement and support from related persons, particularly their parents and teachers; on the other hand, the major motivation for participants who planned for work was self-considering about matching plan with their goals.

The survey ratings for anxiety included 24 characteristics, organized according to three core domains: Academic education, Career/Job, and Social and Communication. Seven of the top ten characteristics fell within the Social and Communication domain. However, there was no significant different of anxiety level between deaf high school students who had plans for higher education and those who had plans to work. The mean total educational anxiety level for participants who had plans for higher education was 1.77 (out of 3), whereas for participants who had plan for career/job it was 1.56. In the career anxiety section, the mean of participants who had plan for career/job's anxiety was 1.77 and for participants who planned for higher education's anxiety was 1.60.

INTRODUCTION

This research topic was generated during my summer internship at a school for the deaf at Chiang Mai – a rural province of Thailand – with deaf high school students. I observed that many deaf high school students, particularly 12th grade students, had less motivation to study in classrooms. From conversing with them, I found a reason for their lower motivation is anxiety about their future upon graduating from high school. Indeed, they have anxiety about facing an uncertain future. This anxiety of high deaf school students was increased after they received information about negative experiences from older students who had graduated from the school and experienced failures in higher education and careers. In addition, there are studies in Thailand indicating that the educational achievement of deaf students is low to very low level when compared with hearing students (Prasansin, 1997). Most deaf students realize their problem of low educational achievement. This makes them have more anxiety about continuing to study in higher education. Some deaf students stop thinking about continuing their studies in college and decide instead to seek work. However, both working and studying in college would be a new environment for them. They would meet new persons, new places, new rules, and so on that are different from their high school environment.

For this reason, I would like to study “anxiety in high school students who are deaf and hard of hearing about their future education and career” before they graduate from high school. This is a pilot study that focuses on Anusarnsunthorn School for the Deaf at Chiang Mai province – a rural city in the upper north of Thailand. This research

can provide useful information for teachers of deaf students that will help them to understand the students' problems and find a way to prepare them before graduating from high school. In fact, if we do not know what their anxiety problems are, how can we help them to meet their goal? Conversely, if we understand their anxiety problems, we can help the students decrease or get rid of their anxiety and get ready to face their new world before graduating from high school.

Statement of the Problem

An important problem in 12th grade students who are deaf and hard of hearing is anxiety about their future upon graduating from high school, including future educational anxiety and future career anxiety. As teachers of deaf students, we should know and understand the students' anxiety in order to help them and develop appropriate related services for them.

Importance of the Problem

This study will raise awareness of anxiety in high school students who are deaf and hard of hearing about their future. Also, it will provide useful information about the level of anxiety of these students in terms of educational anxiety and career anxiety. Another benefit of the study is that it will enable special education teachers to prepare deaf high school students and reduce their anxiety before they graduate from high school.

LITERATURE REVIEW

General Information about Deaf Education in Thailand

A survey in Thailand reported that there were about 1.1 million people with disabilities in Thailand during 1993-2002. This statistic means the percentage of people with disabilities in Thailand is around 1.8 percent of the total population. Moreover, most

people with disabilities are in the northeast and the north of Thailand because these two parts of Thailand are considered the poorest in Thailand. On the various types of disability, the number of people with hearing disability was the second type of disability with 13.2 percent of all types of disabilities (Patibatsarakich, 2002). However, there is a converse statistics that there is a decreasing number of deaf students who have access to basic education from 2002 to 2003 although the number of people with a hearing disability is second type in the disabilities. That is, the number of deaf students who have access to basic education in Thailand decreased from 11,357 in 2002 to 4,685 in 2003 (Office of the Educational Council, 2004).

Educational institutions in Thailand are controlled by the central government to a wider extent than in neighboring non-communist countries, such as Malaysia and Philippines. Primary education consists of a six-year elementary term. The primary education is compulsory for children between the ages of 7 and 15. There is no compulsory education for those who have not finished elementary school when reaching the age of 15, or for those who finish elementary school before reaching the age of 15. Moreover, secondary education consists of six-year terms. Colleges and vocational schools also follow after high school (Ministry of Education, 2004). Indeed, the structure of the current education system in Thailand is composed of three years of pre-primary education, six years of primary education (1st – 6th grades), three years of lower-secondary education (7th – 9th grades), and three years of upper-secondary education (10th – 12th grades), in the fields of both general and vocational education (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2005)

For the legislation about special education, it is surprising that there is not a Special Education Law in Thailand as in many countries. The education for children with disabilities in Thailand is referred to as the National Economic and Social Development Plan, the Rehabilitation for Disabled Persons Act, and the Education Law. The National Economic and Social Development Plan describes strategies for developing persons with disabilities. The Rehabilitation for Disabled Persons Act describes the rights of medical, educational, and occupational rehabilitation services; job placement; and community support. And the New Reformation Education Law requires free basic education for twelve years with special expenses in educational media, services, accessibility and other welfare for students with disabilities (Patibatsarakich, 2002).

In the National Education Act B.C.2542, there is a statement about encouraging parents' involvement in education for students with disabilities; however, the involvement of parents of children with disabilities in Thailand is less than the involvement of parents of non-disabled children, particularly, the parents who have low socioeconomic status (Ministry of Education, Thailand, 1999). An important reason is the attitude of the parents toward their children with disabilities. They think that children with disabilities cannot study as well as non-disabled children. Also, they do not have information about schools that have special services for students with disabilities. Some parents are embarrassed to admit that they have children with disabilities in their families. However, parents with higher socioeconomic status have more involvement in the education of their children. Also, they play a most important key role for their children's education (Arayawinyoo, 1998).

Although the current trend of special education in Thailand is changing towards mainstreaming in regular schools, special education for children with disabilities in the past was organized according to the type of disabilities. As a result, there are many special education schools for each type of disabilities. A study of special education found that the highest percentage (39%) of research has been focused hearing loss (Chewpattanakul et al., 2002). However, most deaf students could not study in undergraduate and graduate programs, particularly deaf children who are not in Bangkok – the capital of Thailand. This is because the schools for the deaf in Thailand follow a lower standard curriculum than regular schools. As a result, most deaf students in the schools for the deaf cannot pass the nation-wide examination to enter local colleges and universities with general students.

Reilly and Suvannus (1999) studied education of deaf people in Thailand. The authors showed that enrollments at schools in Thailand form like a pyramid, with far fewer people in schools at the higher levels. In schools for the deaf in Thailand, the drop-off in enrollment is greater than in schools for the hearing. Notably, while 68% of deaf students attended primary school, only 3 percent attended higher secondary school. This statement is relevant to the Ministry of Education (2004) in terms of the downward trend in deaf students' enrollments for the future higher education. As a result, no academic education for deaf students is available higher than the twelfth grade. Moreover, through the 1990s, higher education for deaf students was limited to vocational education centers, private apprenticeships, and a college for oral and literate deaf people.

However, from 1998–2004, there was an interesting change in deaf education in Thailand, due in large part to a group of professionals and parents who requested more

opportunities for Thai deaf students to study higher education. For this reason, at that time, two colleges formally admitted deaf students: Suan Dusit Rajchabhat University and the new Ratchasuda College, a facility of Mahidol University (C. Reilly and N. Reilly, 2005).

Anxiety

An anxiety problem involves excessive worry, stressfulness, and fearfulness. When students have anxiety problems, their behaviors and facial expressions will change. We can observe that they are unhappy, upset, depressed, lose attention in class, etc. Among the causes for anxiety in students are the fear and discomfort of changing schools (Center for Mental Health in Schools, 2004). For high school students who are deaf and hard of hearing, graduating from the school not only means changing to a new school, but it is also changing educational systems. Moreover, some students will go to work instead of continuing to study in college. Santiwaranon (1989) studied anxiety in secondary school hearing students before graduation. He found that the two highest anxieties of the students are associated with future careers and education. Therefore, I will examine anxiety of high school students who are deaf and hard of hearing with regard to the same issues of future education and future career.

Anxiety in High School Students about Higher Education

Generally, most hearing high school students in Thailand have anxiety about continuing to study in higher education. If they have high hopes of studying in popular universities, they have to study hard and to compete in stressful conditions. In fact, the percentage of high school students who could pass the national university entrance examination in Thailand each year is about 50%-60% (Tapinta, 2004). Thus, it is not

surprising that many high school students will have anxiety in this stressful competition. Kowsuvon (2000) studied anxiety in 12th grade hearing students preparing for the national university entrance examination in the Prince Royal's school, Chiang Mai province, Thailand. She found that students who are hearing have high levels of anxiety. This result agrees with the study of Seangusamas (2000) that found the anxiety in the medium levels for students who studied in schools at Muang district, Chiang Mai province. This anxiety involved learning-teaching systems of their school, and the students' preparation.

Northeast Technical Assistance Center (2000) indicates that the anxiety of high school students who are deaf and hard of hearing is more complex and detailed. Many questions occur in their minds, such as where they want to be living as an adult, how they will be making personal decisions and managing their new situations, how they choose the right college, how they apply to college, what type of accommodations they need, how they get accommodation services, and so on. Additionally, in some colleges, the deaf students cannot enroll in all programs provided in the college because of their hearing loss and speech skill. Also, they might not provide interpreters, free tutors, notetakers, or assistive devices the students need. Moreover, many students who are deaf and hard of hearing have specific limitations on participating with the general society because of educational and social factors (Laurent Clerc National Deaf Education, 1999). These statements are relevant to deaf and hard of hearing students in Thailand because high school graduation means an unpredictable future, they have no guarantee of educational accessibilities, related services providing, familiar mode of communication, and social acceptance in colleges or workplace. For this reason, they do not have only the

anxiety of the national university entrance examination, but they also have the anxiety of communication, social interaction, and others.

For these reasons, it is hard for high school students who are deaf and hard of hearing to pass the national university examination for studying in higher education. Indeed, there are less educational opportunities for deaf students in Thailand than for hearing. Notably, through 1995, all schools for the deaf in Thailand offered nine grades of instruction. After that, instruction was extended through the twelfth grade in some of deaf schools for the deaf (Reilly and Suvannus, 1999). For instance, in a case of Thai deaf girl, Peoungpaka Janawong, she said that she went to a school for the first time at eight years old without Thai sign language from her family. Also, her teachers in the school were not good in communication with Thai sign language. Therefore, when she graduated ninth grade, she had no opportunity to continue studying in higher education (Shettle, 2002). In addition, in the case of Patcharaporn Nitianansakul, she said she had taken the national university entrance examination for a popular university in Thailand where she expected to enroll, but she could not pass the entrance examination. She also said during that year there were no deaf students who could pass the entrance examination for college. Conversely, there were many blind students who could pass the entrance examination (Poochatkarnraiwan, 2005). In fact, there are many conditions and factors related to these educational opportunities, including, economic and social status of families, needs and readiness, transportation availability, information intake ability, policy and budget support from Royal Thai Government, etc. (Roopkumdee, 1999).

Anxiety in High School Students about Future Career

Non-disabled high school students, before graduating from high school, have less anxiety about finding jobs. This is because most non-disabled high school students in Thailand focus on continuing to study in higher education. However, it is different for high school students with disabilities. This is because they fewer students with disabilities can pass the national university entrance examination into universities in Thailand. As a result, many students with disabilities change their goal after graduating from their high schools, going into the workplace instead. Roopkumdee (1999) studied the educational opportunities of persons with disabilities in Thailand. She found that most persons with disabilities in Thailand graduated from primary schools (6th grade) and high schools (12th grade). She hardly found any persons with disabilities who had studied in colleges/universities. Conversely, Roopkumdee found that after graduating from high schools, most persons with disabilities in Thailand would focus on finding jobs.

For this reason, future career anxiety is continually influenced by the educational anxiety. Most, deaf and hard of hearing high school students who think that they will not pass the national university entrance examination will think about work instead. However, the careers of high school graduates in Thailand are blue collar careers. Indeed, it is hard to find jobs for deaf students who graduated from high schools. Aunsorn (2002) surveyed the vocational needs of deaf students. She found that deaf students, both male and female deaf students, wanted to become “teachers” the most. When the vocational expectation of the students is a dream that they cannot reach, they will be unhappy, upset, and depressed. This is one cause of the anxiety in high school students who are deaf and hard of hearing.

Reilly and Reilly (2005) wrote an article about deaf working people in Thailand. They stated that some deaf people were working in schools around Thailand through the 1990s. Most deaf people worked in low positions, such as janitorial and support staff. In the 1990s, many new schools for the deaf were established in the rural provinces and cities in Thailand. Deaf people were hired on yearly contracts to work only as aides and dorm supervisors. Starting in 2004, this situation began to change and deaf people with college training and degrees in teaching Thai sign language and deaf education were hired to work in good positions. This change was due in large part to increased opportunities for higher education at Ratchasuda College. Also, they gained the right to compete for civil service positions. However, they are still hired to work in teaching on yearly contracts, with no more job security than the deaf aides of the past. In the case of a school for the deaf at Tak province – the lower north of Thailand – there was only one deaf teacher in the school. This male teacher had worked through many difficulties to become one of two deaf people in the nation to earn a civil service position. However, in the same year, five deaf people were hired to work only as aides, even though they have college education and have been adopted by deaf children as role models, mentors, and teachers.

Reilly and Suvannus (1999) wrote an article about the vocational status of deaf Thai people. They found that deaf graduates have problems finding job/work. Although the authors were unable to use national databases because there are no national labor statistics available for disabled people in 2004, they did locate survey about deaf people finding jobs in the past. This survey found that 49 percent of 489 deaf people had no income although they had been trained in special vocational institutions. This situation

reflect that labor market in Thailand might have fewer acceptances of deaf labors or vocational training was not relevant to demanding of the labor market. This leads to a most serious problem where deaf people are given manual jobs or less important positions only. The important reason is the attitude of employers toward deaf people as employees. They feel those who cannot speak deserve less. Moreover, many deaf graduates moved to the rural areas to find companionship and jobs. People who live in the rural areas drift from there toward Bangkok and smaller cities. This is because the streets of Bangkok are where deaf people have found a measure of personal freedom through financial venture. There is a busy economy of deaf merchants, employees, and suppliers selling handcrafts to tourists.

In addition, there was a finding that many deaf people had left their jobs at the schools because of the attraction to beginning their own business. The economic system of deaf people is multi-layered and comprised of merchants with employees and sales booths, vendors with one booth, wage-earning clerks, and commissioned suppliers. These jobs are part of the curriculum of all schools for the deaf that provide vocational education for deaf students in 10th to 12th grades. Hence, the curriculum does not provide these deaf students with the academic foundation required for higher education that would lead to better jobs (Reilly and Suvannus, 1999).

METHOD

The purpose of the pilot study is to explore levels of anxieties in deaf high school students about their future upon graduating from school. For this paper, anxiety is defined as deaf high school students' feelings of uncertainty as they approach graduation from high school. Admission decisions depended on the responsibility of director and teachers

of deaf students at the Anusarnsunthorn School for the Deaf. The present study addresses the following two questions:

1. What is the level of anxiety in high school students who are deaf and hard of hearing about their future education and future careers upon graduating from high school?
2. Are the levels of anxieties similar for education and careers?

Subjects/Participants

A total of 29 deaf students were in the 12th grade classes at the Anusarnsunthorn School for the Deaf at Chiang Mai province, Thailand. All 29 students were invited to complete a survey for this study.

Instrument

A survey questionnaire was used in this pilot study. There was a 24 item anxiety scale questionnaire. The three-point rating scale (0-3) was used to rate anxiety about future education and career of deaf students in 12th grade at the Anusarnsunthorn School for the Deaf. Students were asked to rate their anxiety between 0 and 3, in response to a series of statements. The survey also included a section related to the subject's general background. No student names were used on the survey (see Appendix A).

Procedure

The survey questionnaire, developed in English, was translated into Thai language. It was given to the 29 deaf students in 12th grade at the Anusarnsunthorn School for the Deaf. The school prepared deaf students for their upcoming graduation at the beginning of March. The director of the Anusarnsunthorn School for the Deaf and an assistant director at the school had been contacted and had agreed to administer the survey. In Thai

culture, it was required that a letter of support for the project be sent by me and the MSSE program director (see Appendix B). I enclosed a master copy of the survey and an administrative protocol for teachers of deaf students in 12th grade with the letter of support. Also, I sent out thirty master copies of the survey through my assistant in Thailand, who helped to bring the copied surveys to the school. Arrangements had been made to conduct the survey. The assistant director agreed to schedule all three 12th grade classes to meet together, in order to facilitate student participation in the survey. Their participation was voluntary. The final report will be available to students to read the results. This study will be used to help deaf and hard of hearing students to prepare for future education and careers, and to help to address anxiety they may experience in these areas. The survey questionnaires are the tool for data collection. The analysis is descriptive statistics and will include frequency, percentage, and mean.

RESULTS

Twenty-nine deaf students participated in my survey; fifteen are male, and fourteen are female. When asked what their overall GPA is, 44.8% of these participants replied the GPA 2.50-2.99, 27.6% replied the GPA 3.00-3.49, 13.8% replied the GPA 3.50-4.00, 10.3% replied the GPA 2.00-2.49, and 3.4% replied the GPA lower 2.00.

When asked their plans for the future, when they graduate from school, 34.5% said they planned to study in higher education, and 65.5% said they planned to work as shown in Table 1 and Figure 1.

Plan	N	%
Study in higher education	10	34.5
Go to work	19	65.5

Table 1: Plan for the future after graduating from high school

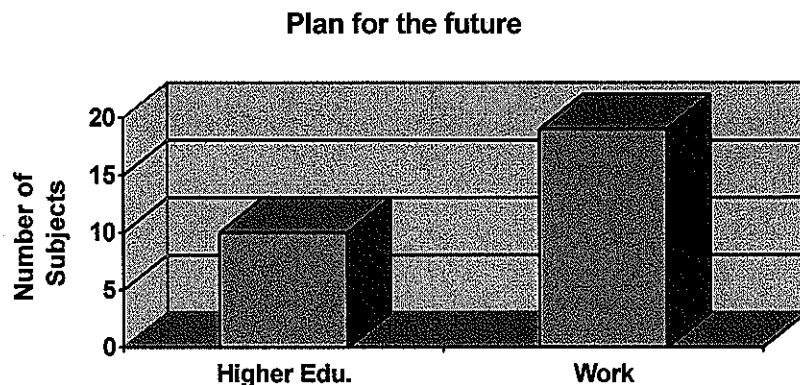


Figure 1: A graph showing Plan for the future after graduating from high school

Out of the participants who planned to study in higher education, 27.8% planned to enroll in Ratchabhat Chiang Mai University (RCU), 27.8% planned to enroll in Ratchamongkol Institute of Technology (RIT) on Payap campus, Chiang Mai; 22.2% planned to enroll in Chiang Mai University (CMU), and 22.2% planned to enroll in Ratchabhat Suan Dusit University (RSDU), Bangkok as shown in Table 2 and Figure 2.

Colleges	N	%
Ratchabhat Chiang Mai (RCU)	5	27.8
Ratchabhat Suan Dusit (RSDU)	4	22.2
c (CMU)	4	22.2
Ratchamongkol Institute of Technology on Paryap campus (RIT)	5	27.8

Table 2: Expectation of College enrollment

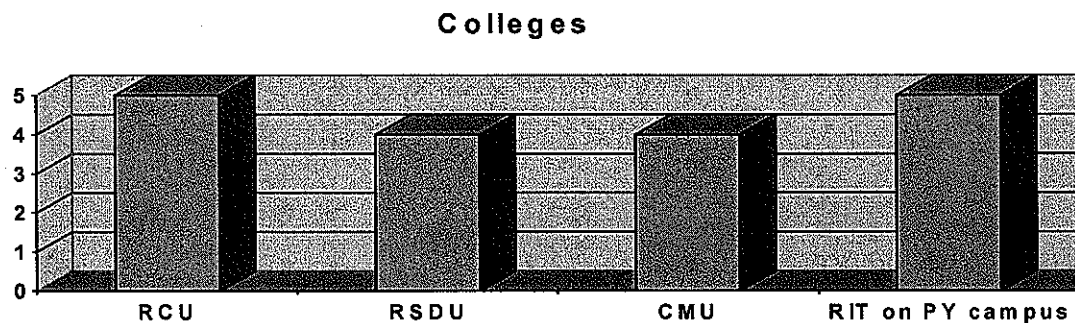


Figure 2: A graph showing expectation of college enrollment

When asked their reasons for going to college, 50% said their parents advised them to go to college, 20% cited teachers' advice, 20% said college matches with their goals, and 10% said the college has many deaf students and often accepts deaf students to study. Moreover, when asked what they will do if they cannot pass the national entrance examination, more than half, 60%, said they will apply to a college that has special programs for deaf students, such as Ratchasuda College and Ratchabhat Suan Dusit University, 40% said they will go to work.

Of the participants who planned to work, 62.5% plan to work in their own or the family business, 29.2% will work as employee of others, and 8.3% will take vocational training as shown in Table 3 and Figure 3.

Work	N	%
Own/Family business	15	62.5
- <i>farm and garden</i>	6	
- <i>shop/store</i>	3	
- <i>sewing</i>	2	
- <i>restaurant</i>	1	
- <i>flower decoration</i>	1	
- <i>cab driver</i>	1	
- <i>making cake</i>	1	
Employee	7	29.2
- <i>craftsman</i>	2	
- <i>making paper mulberry</i>	2	
- <i>car care</i>	1	
- <i>gas station</i>	1	
- <i>housekeeping</i>	1	
Vocational Training	2	8.3

Table 3: Expectation of future careers/jobs

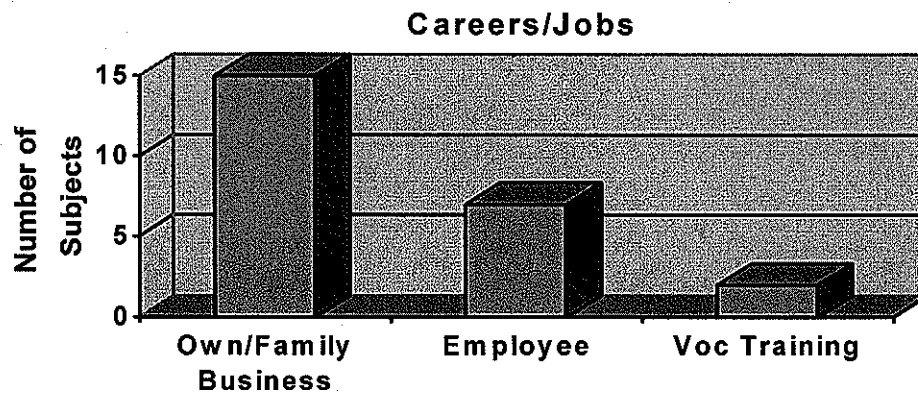


Figure 3: A graph showing expectation of future career/job

Reasons given for choosing careers/jobs instead of college include matches with their goals (45.8%), advice of parents (25%), advice of teachers (12.5%), following their friends in the same way (8.3%), and feeling that the workplace has deaf people and will accept deaf people to work (8.3%). When asked what they will do if they cannot find careers and jobs, 73.7% said they will stay at home, 21.1% said others (they didn't indicate answers to this question), and 5.3% said they will enroll in an Open University that does not require the entrance examination.

The survey ratings for anxiety included the distribution of all 24 anxiety characteristics according to three core domains: (1) Academic education, (2) Career/Job, and (3) Social and Communication. These domains are arranged, according to the number of items within each category. The three domains were set up based on a review of all 24 characteristics (see Part II in Appendix A). However, for the purpose of this study, each item was placed under only one of the three domains. A complete listing of the 24 anxieties characteristics placed under the following three domains can be found in Table 4.

This study focuses on the level of anxiety in high school students who are deaf and hard of hearing about their future education and future careers upon graduating from

high school is. The respondents' survey ratings for anxiety characteristics and mean scores are shown in Table 5. The data were computed and compiled based on each characteristic of the following domains. They are organized from highest to lowest with the top ten characteristics highlighted in bold. Seven of the top ten characteristics, perceived by all 29 deaf students, were under the domain – Social and Communication.

Next, the data were organized based on the top five characteristics within the sections of (1) plan for college and (2) work. Table 6 is compares the top ten anxiety characteristics based on the deaf high school students' plan for the future colleges and careers/jobs. As with this table, the items were organized according to their mean scores from highest to lowest within the top ten characteristics highlighted in bold. A total of 10 students indicated their plan for studying in colleges on their surveys, and 19 reported plans for work. Half of the top ten characteristics answered by participants who plan to study in higher education were shared with participants who plan to work; the remaining five were different characteristics.

The survey included twelve characteristics of educational anxiety and twelve characteristics of career anxiety. The results of this study revealed that there was no significant different between deaf high school students who had plan for high education and who had plan for work's anxiety. The mean of total educational anxiety section for participants who had plan for higher education was 1.77 (out of 3), whereas for participants who had plan for work, 1.56 (out of 3) level of anxiety. In the career anxiety section, participants who had plan for careers/jobs' mean was 1.77 (out of 3) and for participants who had plan for high education's mean was 1.60 (out of 3) as shown in Table 6.

DOMAINS	ANXIETY CHARACTERISTICS
Academic Education	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Participants feel anxious when they think about taking the national university entrance examination for higher education 2. If participants take the national university entrance examination, they feel anxious about taking each subject in the entrance examination: <i>Mathematics, Thai Language, English, Social Studies, and Science</i> 4. When participants think about taking the entrance examination for college, they feel anxious that they will not be able to do it 5. Participants feel anxious that no one has discussed early preparation for the entrance examination into higher education with them 6. If participants can enter a college, they feel anxious that they will fall behind my hearing peers in their coursework
Career/Job	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 13. Participants feel anxious when they think about finding future jobs/careers before graduating from high school 14. If participants graduate from high school, they feel anxious that they will not find any careers/jobs 15. Participants feel anxious that they will work in a low position 16. Participants feel anxious that they will have low salary 17. If participants can find job/career, they feel anxious that hearing co-workers will not accept them 20. When participants think about applying for jobs/careers, they feel anxious that employers will not hire them for job/career 22. Participants feel anxious that no one has discussed early preparation for the future job/career with them
Social/Communication	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. If participants cannot pass the entrance examination, they feel anxious that their parent(s) will be disappointed in them 7. If participants cannot pass the entrance examination for higher education, they feel anxious that other people will have negative attitudes toward them for having a lower education 8. When colleges never have had deaf students before, participants feel anxious that it is hard to enroll the college 9. Participants feel anxious that hearing peers will not believe they passed the same entrance examination to enter college 10. Participants feel anxious about communication with hearing peers in college 11. Participants feel anxious about participation in activities with hearing peers in college 12. Participants feel anxious about communication with their academic advisor and/or instructors in college 18. Participants feel anxious that they will not have any friend(s) in the workplace 19. When the workplace never has had deaf people working before, participants feel anxious that it is hard to be accepted for job position 21. If participants cannot find any job/career, they feel anxious that their parent(s) will be disappointed in them 23. If participants apply for jobs/careers, they feel anxious that they will have communication problems with their employers 24. Participants feel anxious about communication with hearing co-workers in the workplace

Table 4: Domains of anxiety characteristics

ANXIETY CHARACTERISTICS	<i>Mean</i> (N=29)
19. When the workplace never has had deaf people working before, participants feel anxious that it is hard to be accepted for job position	2.14
24. Participants feel anxious about communication with hearing co-workers in the workplace	2.10
8. When colleges never have had deaf students before, participants feel anxious that it is hard to enroll the college	1.97
11. Participants feel anxious about participation in activities with hearing peers in college	1.93
12. Participants feel anxious about communication with their academic advisor and/or instructors in college	1.90
13. Participants feel anxious when they think about finding future jobs/careers before graduating from high school	1.90
16. Participants feel anxious that they will have low salary	1.90
21. If participants cannot find any job/career, they feel anxious that their parent(s) will be disappointed in them	1.90
10. Participants feel anxious about communication with hearing peers in college	1.79
2. If participants take the national university entrance examination, they feel anxious about taking each subject in the entrance examination: <i>Mathematics, Thai Language, English, Social Studies, and Science</i>	1.78
6. If participants can enter a college, they feel anxious that they will fall behind my hearing peers in their coursework	1.76
1. Participants feel anxious when they think about taking the national university entrance examination for higher education	1.70
14. If participants graduate from high school, they feel anxious that they will not find any careers/jobs	1.69
15. Participants feel anxious that they will work in a low position	1.66
22. Participants feel anxious that no one has discussed early preparation for the future job/career with them	1.62
23. If participants apply for jobs/careers, they feel anxious that they will have communication problems with their employers	1.52
3. If participants cannot pass the entrance examination, they feel anxious that their parent(s) will be disappointed in them	1.46
20. When participants think about applying for jobs/careers, they feel anxious that employers will not hire them for job/career	1.45
7. If participants cannot pass the entrance examination for higher education, they feel anxious that other people will have negative attitudes toward them for having a lower education	1.43
9. Participants feel anxious that hearing peers will not believe they passed the same entrance examination to enter college	1.34
17. If participants can find job/career, they feel anxious that hearing co-workers will not accept them	1.34
18. Participants feel anxious that they will not have any friend(s) in the workplace	1.32
5. Participants feel anxious that no one has discussed early preparation for the entrance examination into higher education with them	1.28
4. When participants think about taking the entrance examination for college, they feel anxious that they will not be able to do it	1.24

Table 5: Ratings of anxiety characteristics by deaf high school students

ANXIETY CHARACTERISTICS	<i>Mean</i>	
	college (N=10)	work (N=19)
1. Participants feel anxious when they think about taking the national university entrance examination for higher education	2.20	1.41
2. If participants take the national university entrance examination, they feel anxious about taking each subject in the entrance examination: <i>Mathematics, Thai Language, English, Social Studies, and Science</i>	1.98	1.69
3. If participants cannot pass the entrance examination, they feel anxious that their parent(s) will be disappointed in them	1.89	1.26
4. When participants think about taking the entrance examination for college, they feel anxious that they will not be able to do it	1.50	1.11
5. Participants feel anxious that no one has discussed early preparation for the entrance examination into higher education with them	1.40	1.21
6. If participants can enter a college, they feel anxious that they will fall behind my hearing peers in their coursework	1.90	1.68
7. If participants cannot pass the entrance examination for higher education, they feel anxious that other people will have negative attitudes toward them for having a lower education	1.00	1.67
8. When colleges never have had deaf students before, participants feel anxious that it is hard to enroll the college	1.90	2.00
9. Participants feel anxious that hearing peers will not believe they passed the same entrance examination to enter college	1.50	1.26
10. Participants feel anxious about communication with hearing peers in college	1.80	1.79
11. Participants feel anxious about participation in activities with hearing peers in college	2.20	1.79
12. Participants feel anxious about communication with their academic advisor and/or instructors in college	2.00	1.84
<i>MEAN</i> (for educational anxiety)	1.77	1.56
13. Participants feel anxious when they think about finding future jobs/careers before graduating from high school	1.80	1.95
14. If participants graduate from high school, they feel anxious that they will not find any careers/jobs	1.60	1.74
15. Participants feel anxious that they will work in a low position	1.20	1.89
16. Participants feel anxious that they will have low salary	1.60	2.05
17. If participants can find job/career, they feel anxious that hearing co-workers will not accept them	1.20	1.42
18. Participants feel anxious that they will not have any friend(s) in the workplace	1.22	1.37
19. When the workplace never has had deaf people working before, participants feel anxious that it is hard to be accepted for job position.	1.78	2.32
20. When participants think about applying for jobs/careers, they feel anxious that employers will not hire them for job/career	1.10	1.63
21. If participants cannot find any job/career, they feel anxious that their parent(s) will be disappointed in them	2.00	1.79
22. Participants feel anxious that no one has discussed early preparation for the future job/career with them	1.90	1.47
23. If participants apply for jobs/careers, they feel anxious that they will have communication problems with their employers	1.90	1.32
24. Participants feel anxious about communication with hearing co-workers in the workplace	1.90	2.32
<i>MEAN</i> (for career anxiety)	1.60	1.77

Table 6: Anxiety characteristics as perceived by participants who plan to study in colleges and who plan to go to work

DISCUSSION

After collecting data from 29 deaf students, I analyzed and reviewed the results from their answers on the survey questionnaire. It is interesting that most of the deaf students in this survey have a good to excellent Grade Point Average, but most of them plan to work instead of to study in higher education – see Table 1 and Figure 1. This result indicates that the educational achievement in their high school program does not influence on their decision making in continuing higher education.

Additionally, when we review the survey results of the participants who planned to study in higher education, we find that most of colleges/universities they expect to enroll after graduating from high school are at Chiang Mai – a province in the northern part of Thailand where they have studied high school – see Table 2 and Figure 2.

However, when we review the survey result of the participants who planned to work, we find that most of them have planned to work as own/family business, particularly farm and garden which is the major career of the northern population in Thailand. These results show that most of deaf students in this survey expect to study and work in their province with their families. This strong relationship in family and community is relevant to native northern culture of Thailand.

Respondents' reasons for planning to study and planning to work are interesting. For participants who planned to study, results indicate that external factors – particularly advice from parents and teachers – is a very strong influence. Indeed, just 20% the participants who planned to study made their decision to continue to study because of the internal factor that this bent matched with their goals. On the other hand, of participants who planned to work, both internal factors and external factors influenced their decision.

That is, they tried to make their decision by considering their goals as well as considering the advice of others. Notably, the major reason for continuing their studies of the deaf students is advice from related people while those decide to work relied more on their goals. For this reason, as teachers of deaf students, we should seek to learn the goals of our students, including why higher education might not match with their goals.

In term of anxiety, the results show that participants have anxieties at the mild to middle level. However, when I reviewed specifically the results for each item, I found that there are two items, number 19 and 24, in when participants demonstrated anxiety at the middle to high level – see Table 5. These two items are in social and communication domain, an area that is a frequent and major problem of most deaf and hard of hearing students. This result may reflect in two aspects of deaf education at the residential school where this survey was conducted: student preparation and social acceptance. That is, these deaf students might not feel adequately prepared for participation with hearing society. At the same time, hearing society might not be informed about acceptance deaf students into the social activities. When hearing society lacks the confidence to accept deaf students and the deaf students realize these deaf students will have less social confidence themselves. As the result, deaf students may experience higher levels of anxiety in social and communication domains.

Also, when we compare the level of anxiety between the participants who planned to study and the participants who planned to work, they are not different. Both groups have anxiety at mild to middle levels (Table 6). For this reason, although they have different plan for the future, both groups of students they should be prepared for all

domains of anxiety, including academic education, career/job, and social and communication.

It is important to note that this survey consists of a small number of participants and is limited to only one school. The results from this study may therefore not represent students with larger number of participants or other groups of deaf students. Although this study has a limited generalization, it can be a pilot study regards reflect the anxiety of deaf high school students about the future education and career that we, as teachers of deaf students, should realize and explore processes to help deaf students to plan their future and meet their goals with confidentiality and successfully.

CONCLUSION

Anxiety can occur in all people. If we are able to use anxiety appropriately to be an inner driver for fighting barriers, we will be successful. On the other hand, if we are not able to manage our anxiety appropriately, we will have no confidence in our ability to face the future. The data from this study shows the anxiety level in 29 deaf high school students about their future education and careers. Most participants, both those who planned to study and those who planned to work, have anxiety at the mild to middle level, which is in the manageable level. Therefore, teachers of deaf students should help deaf students to manage their anxiety appropriately and prepare them systematically to plan their future before graduating from high school. This process should help them to have choices as they plan for their future and to face the future with confidence.

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Appendix A

Survey Questionnaire

Anxiety in Deaf High School Students about the Future before Graduating School

I am trying to learn about the levels of anxiety that deaf and hard of hearing students experience as they finish high school. In particular I want to learn about anxiety for the future in education and careers. By completing this survey you are helping me to learn about this topic and giving me permission to include your responses in my study. I will use the results to recommend improvements in high school counseling and curriculum that may reduce anxiety.

Your participation in this study is voluntary. You will not be identified in the survey. You may stop working on the survey at any time without penalty. There are no risks to completing this survey. I will send a copy of my report to your school so that you can read the results.

If you have any questions, please ask your teacher who will be administering the survey.

Thanks very much!

*Theeratorn Lersilp,
Graduate Student in Secondary Education of Deaf and Hard of Hearing Students,
National Technical Institute for the Deaf at Rochester Institute of Technology*

Part I General background about yourself

1. Your gender is

- 1) male
- 2) female

2. What is your overall GPA?

- 1) 1.99 and lower
- 2) 2.00 – 2.49
- 3) 2.50 – 2.99
- 4) 3.00 – 3.49
- 5) 3.50 – 4.00

3. What is your plan for the future when you graduate school?

- 1) I will continue to study in higher education[please..... **ANSWER #4-8**
and skip #9-12]
- 2) I will go to work[please skip #4-8 and **ANSWER #9-12**]

3) I will go to both study and work at the same time.....[please **ANSWER #4-12**]

4) Other _____

4. From **question #3**, if you have a plan to continue to study in higher education, at which college do you expect to study in higher education?

Please make the rank of colleges you expect to enroll, with #1 your first choice

1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

5. What are your reasons for going to college? (Circle all that apply)

1) I think that college matches with my skill

2) My parent(s) advise me to go to college

3) My teacher(s) advise me to go to college

4) I decide to follow my friend(s) in the same way

5) I know that college has many deaf students and can accept deaf students to study

6) Other _____

6. Do you expect that you can pass the national university entrance examination for college?

1) Yes, I think I can pass the entrance examination

2) No, I do not think I can pass the entrance examination

7. If you can pass the national entrance examination for college, but the programs that have admitted you do not match with your goals, what will you do?

1) I will study in the admitting program/college first. And then, I will prepare to re-take the national entrance examination next year to enter my desired program

2) I will study in the admitting program/college. I will NOT re-take the entrance examination next year

3) Other _____

8. If you cannot pass the national entrance examination, what will you do?

1) I will go to work

2) I will enroll another Open University that does not require the entrance examination

3) I will apply to a college(s) that has special programs for deaf students, such as Ratchasuda College, Suan Dusit Rajchabhat University

4) Other _____

9. From **question #3**, if you go to work instead of college, what careers/jobs do you expect you will find?

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____

10. What are your reasons for choosing these careers/jobs? (Circle all that apply)

- 1) I think that it matches with my skill
- 2) My parent(s) advise me to go to work
- 3) Teacher(s) advise me to go to work
- 4) I decide to follow my friend(s) in the same way
- 5) I know that the workplace has deaf people and can accept deaf people to work.
- 6) Other _____

11. Do you expect that you can be accepted into the workplace you choose?

- 1) Yes, I think I can be accepted into the workplace
- 2) No, I do not think I can be accepted into the workplace
- 3) No answer because I have own business/job or I work with my parent(s)

12. If you do not have career/job, what will you do?

- 1) I will stay at home
- 2) I will take the national university entrance examination for college
- 3) I will enroll an Open University that does not require the entrance examination
- 4) I will apply to college(s) that has special programs for deaf students to study, such as Ratchasuda College, Suan Dusit Rajchabhat University
- 5) Other _____

Part II: Rating survey of anxiety about future career and education in deaf student.

- 1) I feel anxious when I think about taking the national university entrance examination for higher education.
0) don't agree 1) only a little agree 2) somewhat agree 3) a lot agree
- 2) If I take the national university entrance examination, I feel anxious about taking each subject in the entrance examination.
 - 1) I feel anxious about taking **Mathematics**
0) don't agree 1) only a little agree 2) somewhat agree 3) a lot agree
 - 2) I feel anxious about taking **Thai Language**
0) don't agree 1) only a little agree 2) somewhat agree 3) a lot agree

- 3) I feel anxious about taking **English**
0) don't agree 1) only a little agree 2) somewhat agree 3) a lot agree
- 4) I feel anxious about taking **Social Studies**
0) don't agree 1) only a little agree 2) somewhat agree 3) a lot agree
- 5) I feel anxious about taking **Science**
0) don't agree 1) only a little agree 2) somewhat agree 3) a lot agree
- 3) If I cannot pass the entrance examination, I feel anxious that my parent(s) will be disappointed in me.
0) don't agree 1) only a little agree 2) somewhat agree 3) a lot agree
- 4) When I think about taking the entrance examination for college, I feel anxious that I will not be able to do it.
0) don't agree 1) only a little agree 2) somewhat agree 3) a lot agree
- 5) I feel anxious that no one has discussed early preparation for the entrance examination into higher education with me.
0) don't agree 1) only a little agree 2) somewhat agree 3) a lot agree
- 6) If I can enter a college, I feel anxious that I will fall behind my hearing peers in my coursework.
0) don't agree 1) only a little agree 2) somewhat agree 3) a lot agree
- 7) If I cannot pass the entrance examination for higher education, I feel anxious that other people will have negative attitudes toward me for having a lower education.
0) don't agree 1) only a little agree 2) somewhat agree 3) a lot agree
- 8) When colleges have had deaf students before, I feel better to study in the college.
0) don't agree 1) only a little agree 2) somewhat agree 3) a lot agree
- 9) I feel anxious that hearing peers will not believe I passed the same entrance examination to enter college.
0) don't agree 1) only a little agree 2) somewhat agree 3) a lot agree
- 10) I feel anxious about communication with hearing peers in college.
0) don't agree 1) only a little agree 2) somewhat agree 3) a lot agree
- 11) I feel anxious about participation in activities with hearing peers in college.
0) don't agree 1) only a little agree 2) somewhat agree 3) a lot agree
- 12) I feel anxious about communication with my academic advisor and/or instructors in college.
0) don't agree 1) only a little agree 2) somewhat agree 3) a lot agree

- 13) I feel anxious when I think about finding future jobs/careers before graduating from the high school.
0) don't agree 1) only a little agree 2) somewhat agree 3) a lot agree
- 14) If I graduate from the high school, I feel anxious that I will not find any careers/jobs.
0) don't agree 1) only a little agree 2) somewhat agree 3) a lot agree
- 15) I feel anxious that I will work in a low position.
0) don't agree 1) only a little agree 2) somewhat agree 3) a lot agree
- 16) I feel anxious that I will have low salary.
0) don't agree 1) only a little agree 2) somewhat agree 3) a lot agree
- 17) If I can find job/career, I feel anxious that hearing co-workers will not accept me.
0) don't agree 1) only a little agree 2) somewhat agree 3) a lot agree
- 18) I feel anxious that I will not have any friend(s) in the workplace.
0) don't agree 1) only a little agree 2) somewhat agree 3) a lot agree
- 19) I feel better that the workplace has deaf people working.
0) don't agree 1) only a little agree 2) somewhat agree 3) a lot agree
- 20) When I think about applying for jobs/careers, I feel anxious that employers will not hire me for job/career.
0) don't agree 1) only a little agree 2) somewhat agree 3) a lot agree
- 21) If I cannot find any job/career, I feel anxious that my parent(s) will be disappointed in me.
0) don't agree 1) only a little agree 2) somewhat agree 3) a lot agree
- 22) I feel anxious that no one has discussed early preparation for the future job/career with me.
0) don't agree 1) only a little agree 2) somewhat agree 3) a lot agree
- 23) If I apply for jobs/careers, I feel anxious that I will have communication problems with my employers.
0) don't agree 1) only a little agree 2) somewhat agree 3) a lot agree
- 24) I feel anxious about communication with hearing co-workers in the workplace.
0) don't agree 1) only a little agree 2) somewhat agree 3) a lot agree



Thank you for your participation

Appendix B

Letter of Support from Student and MSSE Project Director

National Technical Institute for the Deaf
Masters in Secondary Education for
Students who are Deaf and Hard of
Hearing
52 Lomb Memorial Drive
Rochester, NY, USA 14623

January 17, 2005

Dear Director of the Anusarnsunthorn School for the Deaf
Subject: Permission to gather data for Master's project

My name is THEERATORN LERSILP, and I am a graduate student in Secondary Education for Students who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing at the National Technical Institute for the Deaf (NTID). As part of my work for my Master's degree in Education of the Deaf, I am doing a small research study. My project advisor is Dr. Susan Foster, Professor, in the Department of Research and Teacher Education at Rochester Institute of Technology. I am enclosing a master copy of the survey and an administrative protocol for teachers of deaf students in 12th grade with this letter. Also, I am sending out thirty-five master copies of the survey through my assistant in Thailand. The assistant's name is Benjamat Seephan. The goal of this survey is to identify levels of anxiety about the future by 12th grade deaf and hard of hearing students. I hope that 12th grade students who are deaf and hard of hearing will take the time to complete the survey.

This project is also the capstone of my experience at Anusarnsunthorn School for the Deaf during summer internship. During that internship, I learned a lot from the students about their feelings for the future. This survey will help strengthen and add to the summer data. Furthermore, I am planning to publish the results and I am currently in the process of preparing the manuscript. I will share the results of my study with you, the teachers and the students.

I am hoping to receive the completed survey no later than February 17, 2006. For your convenience, the completed survey can be returned to me by the same assistant, who will pick up at the school. Your help in this project is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,
Theeratorn Lersilp
Graduate student
E-mail: txl6224@rit.edu

Dr. Gerry Bateman
Professor and Director
Master of Science in Secondary Education Program
E-mail: gcbtnmp@rit.edu

Appendix C

Administrative Protocol

For teacher of deaf students in 12th grade

Introduction:

My name is THEERATORN LERSILP, and I am a graduate student in Secondary Education for Students who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing at the National Technical Institute for the Deaf (NTID).

Purpose:

As part of my requirement for graduating this May 2006, I must complete a research study. I have chosen to conduct my research on "Anxiety in deaf high school students about the future." I would like to find out the levels of anxiety students have experienced most.

Instructions:

- 1) Schedule class to meet together
- 2) Hand the survey out to students
- 3) Using Thai sign language to explain to students about the survey. The survey is not an examination. They will not be identified on the survey or in any report. Their participation is voluntary. There is no penalty if they decide not to complete the survey.
- 4) Remind students that they should **not** put their name on the survey
- 5) Explaining to students each question of the survey
- 6) Students circle the appropriate number, located at the first page of the survey, which indicates about students' general background
- 7) Using a pencil, rate the following 24 items based only as it pertains to students' anxiety before graduating school
- 8) If student make a mistake, be sure to erase the mistake completely
- 9) When students have completed their survey, please hand them to the teacher on their way out of the classroom
- 10) I would like to thank you in advance, for your cooperation and students' participation in my study